

highlighting the successes of a small business in my home State of Idaho. This month's recipient of the Small Business of the Month is a veteran-owned business, which is fitting since this week is National Veterans Small Business Week. It is always great to see veterans succeed after they close out their years of service and continue their path as a civilian. The founders of October's Small Business of the Month demonstrate that, with determination and hard work, there is no limit to what can be accomplished. I am honored to recognize an enterprise that makes it their business to help other businesses experience growth and prosperity of their own. As chairman of the Senate Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship, I am pleased to recognize TelStar Associates, Inc., as the Senate Small Business of the Month for October 2017.

TelStar was founded in 1979 by Jose Telleria and Douglas Stark, who decided to join together and use their individual strengths and experience in the field of information technology to create their own business. The company name, TelStar, is a combination of the names of its founders and represents the partnership between Telleria—Tel—and Stark, Star. For their first contract, TelStar developed a software program that tracked the storage and shipping of onions for Murakami Produce. Within a short period of time, TelStar was providing their services to a diverse range of clients in both the private and public sectors, including the Idaho Governor's Office, Idaho Department of Health and Welfare, the Idaho National Laboratory, and Boise State University. TelStar also developed a chemical management and waste disposal management application that is currently used by the U.S. Navy. In addition to being an invaluable asset to their community, TelStar exemplifies the entrepreneurial spirit by continually adapting to the needs of their clients.

As leaders in the IT field, Jose and Douglas created a business known for flexibility and for consistently providing meaningful services. Responding to the changing needs of businesses, TelStar expanded their services from custom contract programming to network support, field services, cyber security, and IT staffing services. TelStar provides their clients with access to affordable services that allow them to improve their IT capabilities. In an increasingly technological world, small businesses have the opportunity to benefit from businesses like Jose and Douglas's. I know the technological challenges businesses can face, which is why I am proud to recognize TelStar, a successful business that is committed to helping other businesses achieve success of their own, by empowering them to be the best at what they do. Since their first contract for Murakami Produce, TelStar has exemplified the innovative nature of many American small businesses.

A belief central to TelStar's culture is that "People make the difference." There is nothing more commendable than helping someone else achieve their goals, and I would like to congratulate Jose Telleria, Douglas Stark, and all of the employees of TelStar for the impact they have had on their community. TelStar's entrepreneurial spirit is an example for every American to follow, and I look forward to watching your continued growth and success.●

REMEMBERING CHESTER RENFRO

● Mr. RUBIO. Mr. President, Chester Renfro of Pinellas County, FL, passed away this October 22. Chet, as he was known to family and friends, was a friend of mine, and I want to say a few words about him in his passing. Married to his wife, Betty, Chet was a graduate of the University of Southern California and an engineer by trade. He designed and installed industrial water pumps for commercial industries and water treatment facilities. He started his career in California, later moving to St. Louis and then Louisville, KY, where he started his own business. He moved to Pinellas County nearly 20 years ago.

Betty was the love of Chet's life, and he adored her. When they married, they each brought their sons with them into the family—Betty and her three sons, Gene, Brad, and Paul Garcia; Chet and his two sons, Rick and Greg Renfro. Their daughter, now Melanie Nethery, came later to bless that family full of boys. Chet loved all of his children but was exceptionally proud of his grandchildren. He would be glad to tell you all about them and their accomplishments.

Chet lived a full, meaningful life, and in everything—professionally, personally, and politically—he worked hard. He loved his Wednesday golf game, his travels with Betty, and his pecan pies. He gave his time and energy to many State and local organizations, including the Southwest Florida Water Management District and the Pinellas County Canvassing Board. I looked to his guidance as a member of my academy board in the Tampa Bay region, interviewing many of the young men and women from that area who want to attend a service academy and serve our country.

Chet Renfro leaves behind a legacy of service to others and of love for his family, friends, and country. He was someone I was proud to call my friend, and he and his family are in my prayers.●

MONTANA'S WOMEN VETERANS OF WWI

● Mr. TESTER. Mr. President, today I wish to honor the hundreds of Montana women who honorably served our country during World War I.

They braved the German u-boats to serve on the frontlines. Women cared for the wounded and connected calls to

the battlefield offices of GEN John Pershing. Without them, the American forces serving in Europe could have faced catastrophe. Without them, the course of the war could have been much different.

We shouldn't be surprised. Montana women have been breaking down barriers for generations.

Merle Egan Anderson pressured the U.S. Government for 60 years to get the women who worked the Army's telephone switchboards the status of "veteran." Montanans like Merle Egan Anderson and Lena Roy volunteered to be a part of the Army Signal Corps without promise of pay, benefits, or recognition of their service. The Signal Corps women, nicknamed the "Hello Girls," proved their worth immediately. Merle, Lena, and their peers' speed and precision allowed officers to communicate across battlefields, enemy lines, and war-torn terrain. They served at the frontlines and quickly garnered the respect of the men with whom they served. They braved enemy fire and suffered casualties among their ranks. Despite their outstanding service, they returned to an indifferent government who denied them veteran status, including healthcare and burial rights.

Merle Egan Anderson took on the government, and 60 years later, she won. When the government granted the "Hello Girls" veteran status, only 18 of the 223 women were still alive.

Nearly 200 Montana nurses entered military service, 86 of whom braved enemy submarine-patrolled waters to care for troops on the frontline. They came from 56 cities, towns, and forgotten railroad stops across the Big Sky State.

Nurses Elizabeth Sandelius from Cokedale and Harriett O'Day from Billings were cited for heroism under fire for their service in France. Cora Craig from Glasgow, MT, received a Silver Medal from the King of Siam for her care of soldiers from present-day Thailand. Eula Butzerin braved the carnage of post-war France to find the battlefield grave of her brother Roy, marked only with a stick and his dog tags.

Thirteen Montana women enlisted in the Navy and served stateside. Gertrude Zerr from Chinook achieved the rank of chief yeoman, directing fellow yeoman in the naval headquarters.

During the war, these women proved to their fellow Americans and the world that women were an asset in battle. Their service defied gender stereotypes and helped changed the tide of public opinion that culminated in the 19th Amendment of our Constitution, granting women the right to vote at long last. They helped pave the way for women to take on combat roles in World War II and beyond.

After the war, Montana's World War I women veterans faded into history. Their service remains largely unknown. These women gave voice and power to a nation of women. Their service and actions helped change the